

**SPECIAL MEETING  
BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN  
(PUBLIC PARTICIPATION)**

**May 6, 2003**

**7:00 PM**

Mayor Baines called the meeting to order.

Mayor Baines calls for the Pledge of Allegiance, this function being led by Alderman Thibault.

A moment of silent prayer is observed.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Wihby, Gatsas, Sysyn, Osborne, Pinard, O’Neil,  
Lopez, Shea, DeVries, Garrity, Smith, Thibault, Forest

Absent: Alderman Guinta

Mayor Baines advised that the purpose of the special meeting is to give residents of Manchester the opportunity to address the Board on items of concern affecting the community; that each person will be given only one opportunity to speak; that comments shall be limited to two minutes to allow all participants the opportunity to speak and any comments must be directed to the Chair.

Mayor Baines requested that any resident wishing to speak come forward to the nearest microphone, clearly state their name and address when recognized, and give their comments. Bob Shaw, 172 Arah Street, stated I’m here tonight not speaking on behalf of the Charter Commission but trying to facilitate some kind of a compromise going on and I thought of a method that might help us Your Honor, so I’m going to come forward and ask you. I watched you have a debate about a fall back, sending a letter to the Governor, and the time the election should be held and you had a debate about that. But I haven’t had a sense, and I could have missed that, you might not have talked about how many Aldermen we should have. So I was thinking that...but basically we’ve had only a few Aldermen appear before us and yourself, and we had a large number the other night from the public speak on this issue. So it would seem to me that it would be great if the City fathers would debate the issue a little and maybe come up with a letter that they could send to the Commission. There would be a consensus of the board, not necessarily 12, which you don’t approve of, or 14, which I don’t approve of, but something that might be workable, something that might

appeal to the other eight that are on the thing. I have been trying for some time Your Honor to get just one person to move from this four or that four to kind of get the compromise going, and I've been unsuccessful. But maybe the Board of Aldermen might have more power to talk to the people on the Commission about this issue from a consensus. In other words, I would be hoping that the board would come up with a solution that might be found compatible to a great number of people and yourself included Sir. Thank you very much for the time.

Brian Houghton, 450 Holly Avenue, stated good evening Mayor and Aldermanic Board. I'm here to speak about the Letter Carrier Food Drive that's going to be taking place this Saturday, May 10<sup>th</sup>. I first want to thank the Mayor and the Aldermen for their past support of this food drive. This is the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual National Association of Letter Carriers Food Drive, which includes all 50 states now. Eleven years ago there was 23 states involved and New Hampshire was one of the original states. It has become the largest food drive in the country. The month of May was originally picked for the food drive because many local food banks, pantries, and shelters are short of supplies and this is to help them make it through the lean summer months. I'd like to thank the citizens of Manchester for the participation through the years and for their continued support. Many of you know Russ Ouellette who is our state coordinator for the food drive. Russ has put in many hours to coordinate volunteers and for drop off points for the food. Also I'd like to thank Mike Lopez who was the original state coordinator and worked for many years on the food drive. In the mail tomorrow people will be receiving these post cards to help stamp out hunger Saturday, May 10<sup>th</sup>. Please leave non-perishable items around your mailbox and we will pick them up. The sponsors for this year are the National Association of Letter Carriers, Campbell Soup Company, the US Postal Services, the AFL CIO, the United Way, and American Second Harvest Ending Hunger. Once again, thank you for your support and participation.

Mayor Baines stated once we start the meeting we will have a proclamation so if you have the time to stay around for that we would appreciate that.

Joseph Levasseur, 866 Elm Street, stated when I was an Alderman two years ago I sat in the Ward 3 chair as a freshman Alderman with a freshman Mayor, and it was his idea to tear down a three story building behind the library and he was all for it. When I told him he was going to be kicking out three families that were paying \$850 per month for rent, he looked at me incredulously and said there's no way that anybody's paying \$850 a month for rent for a one bedroom apartment. It was that moment that I realized that we had a mayor who didn't have a clue of what was going on in the City of Manchester, who didn't realize what kind of rents were being paid in the City of Manchester. So at the next meeting I came in and brought a check from one of the tenants, \$850. I gave it to the Mayor and he looked at it and didn't make any comment except to say wow, I can't believe people are paying rents that high. That was three years ago and rents have increased quite dramatically since then even. But there are other things that you are completely out of touch with Mr. Baines and that is

the baseball stadium. Now I just mention the word referendum and you go crying to the Union Leader and make statements that are completely untrue by the way. But these are just petitions that have come into the restaurant. Now I haven't gone out and asked for signatures, I haven't done really that much. These are people that have brought these in here. There's over 250 and you'd be surprised where they are from. From all different wards, from all different people, and all of them that are registered voters. We haven't really gone out and done any kind of advertising or really worked hard to get these signatures, but I don't think it would take too long to get the signatures necessary. You are completely out of touch with the people of this City of Manchester like you were three years ago. You're out of touch today with this baseball referendum. Today in Ward 1 somebody brought in 17 petitions. They're coming from all over. People do not believe that this stadium should go without a referendum. I hope that somebody here will make a recommendation for reconsideration and this will go to a vote to the people where it belongs.

Raymond Buckley, 24 Gabriel Street, stated I am the Chairman of the Manchester City Democrats. Your Honor and members of the board it is with great reluctance that I appear before you this evening. Over the past dozen years 30 minutes have been set aside for you to receive public input prior to the meetings of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen. This system has worked and I'm proud that I strongly supported it when I was a member of this board. I'm in my sixth year as Chairman of the Manchester City Democrats and this is the first time that I've appeared before this board in this capacity. In fact, for the last dozen years no leader of either political party has wasted the time that has been set aside for legitimate public concerns by Manchester citizens until this year. Over the past few months unfortunately this time period has been routinely misused for partisan posturing, rhetoric, and attacks by the current Chairman of the Manchester City Republicans and we just witnessed it once again. So I'm here tonight to offer you a response. While Mr. Levasseur prefers to portray our City and our leaders in a negative manner, the people of Manchester know the truth. As we sit here this evening, Manchester's future has never looked brighter. Our spirit is strong, our hope unbridled, and our optimism unlimited. Manchester will only falter if the negative voices of doom and gloom prevail. So Your Honor and members of the board I call on you to ignore Mr. Levasseur and his message of defeat. I urge you to stay steady and to continue your work for the bright future the people of Manchester deserve. Thank you.

Mayor Baines directed Mr. Levasseur to please leave the meeting.

Mayor Baines recessed the meeting.

Mayor Baines called the meeting back to order.

Billy Dodd, 181 Mammoth Road, Ward 7, stated I'll ask for a little indulgence if I could. I waited for an hour and a half here at the Charter Commission Hearing and didn't get a chance to speak. With all due respect to Mr. Shaw, when I grew up I was taught to respect my elders and as an individual I will do that. But for what he did on the Charter Commission

is totally uncalled for and at the very least he ought to be run out of town. One of the main things all of you Aldermen should understand is that by eliminating an Alderman At-Large and School Board At-Large you now reduce the number of votes it takes to bond the big money. I'll reiterate one of Alderman Girouard's ideas, is to have one Alderman At-Large represent Wards 1 through 6 and the other one represent 7 through 12. I think if this board gets with the Charter Commission and asks them to have another public hearing, and you look at the merits of that, it's very good. The other thing is Mr. Guinta, I don't know if the check that you get from working for a Congressman has US Government on it, but in two years if this Charter passes, you will not be able to run for Alderman again. The Charter Commission had no consistency whatsoever. They want to place a designation by the Aldermen that are running, but not by the School Board. The School Board actually controls more money than you guys do. They send the budget over here of \$127 million and then the Mayor up here has to par down the rest of the City's budget so we can meet the school budget. They hold a lot more. But I've been in touch with the Office of Special Counsel in DC and if there's any designation whatsoever by a name, it's not a partisan election. The Mayor's salary should be raised. The Mayor in Nashua makes \$89,000 and I don't care who is sitting in that seat up there, the amount of hours they have to put in requires more money than they're getting right now. So ask the permission to hold another thing. The last thing, a little tongue-and-cheek thing in the paper today on naming of the ballpark, and the name down there. Call them the Hobos. It's a little tongue-and-check, but I'll tell you it's got some good merit to it. Get out of the box. Imagine the team being called the Manchester Hobo's. Imagine having three hobos, singing hobos, that are down there. Nobody else has them. Anybody remembers Clem Kadiddlehopper, Red Skelton, everybody loved him. Imagine the parents that will take their kids down there to the hobos. Imagine the guy that may want to propose to his wife in a different way and you could have...trust me, I'm dead serious on this, you could have singing hobos that could sing the National Anthem, sing happy birthday to kids. Everybody's laughing but get out of the box, it's got some merit to it. I'm dead serious about the partisan election.

There being no one else present wishing to speak, on motion of Alderman Thibault, duly seconded by Alderman Garrity, it was voted to take comments under advisement and further to receive and file any written documentation presented.

This being a special meeting of the Board, no further business was presented, and on motion of Alderman Thibault, duly seconded by Alderman Garrity, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk